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# Afghans Put Case Before All Forums

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WASHINGTON, June 18 — It was a long day for the Afghan resistance leaders. They were interviewed at 8 A.M. by Radio Martí, the anti-Castro radio station; they taped an interview with Dan Rather for "The CBS Evening News"; they met briefly with Vice President Bush; they went to a lunch given in their honor at the State Department by Deputy Secretary John S. Whitehead. And now, they were starting the first of four afternoon interviews with news agencies and newspapers.

In the midst of a discussion about the military situation in Afghanistan, Burhanuddin Rabbani, the leader of the visiting group, suddenly began giving vent to something that had evidently been bothering him and the three colleagues in his delegation.

"Some of you American press are calling us 'rebels,' as if we were fighting a legal government," he said through an interpreter.

"We are fighting against invaders. And this is why we are hurt, and sometimes it is more painful than the bullets fired by the enemy. Because this is not done by the enemy, but is being done by the free press. And a free press must call us by the name we really are. Mujahedeen: Freedom Fighters."

## They Have Met Reagan

His comment reflected the bitter-sweet mood of his group, the highest-ranking Afghan group to come to Washington since Soviet military forces moved into Afghanistan in December 1979. They have had much to complain about, but they have also met with President Reagan and virtually every other top official. This should help them in achieving higher political visibility for the resistance, if not the formal diplomatic recognition it sought from the White House.

These are serious men. All are religious. But they differ among themselves about internal developments in Afghanistan, and two other leaders of their "alliance" not only did not come to Washington with them but on Tuesday attacked the visit because they oppose the United States. This public attack was an embarrassment because it demonstrated the difficulty of producing unity in the resistance, but Mr. Rabbani treated it as an example of the voice that the minority in any government has.

For the White House, the Afghans are the latest "freedom fighter" group to come to Washington. The leaders of the guerrillas who constitute the United Nicaraguan Opposition, known generally as the contras, have been regular visitors, lobbying for funds from Congress. Today, they met with Mr. Reagan again, in advance of next week's House vote on Mr. Reagan's request for \$100 million aid for the contras.



The New York Times / Ronald W. Thomas

Nabi Mohammadi, an Afghan resistance leader, leaving the State Department after a meeting yesterday.

**'A free press must call us by the name we really are. Freedom Fighters.'**

*—Burhanuddin Rabbani,  
leader of delegation*

In January, another "freedom fighter," Jonas Savimbi, head of the anti-Government rebel force in Angola, was invited to see Mr. Reagan and other top officials, and lobby for new weapons for his group, Unita.

In the last year, Mr. Reagan has spoken out many times, often in the most eloquent terms, on behalf of such groups. His political advisers have said that this is important for Mr. Reagan to retain the political backing of the conservative wing of the Republican Party, which has made support for Mr. Savimbi and the Afghan leaders a priority.

It is somewhat murky who pays for these visits. Mr. Savimbi said he paid for his from the sale of diamonds mined in his part of Angola. As for the Afghan trip, payment could have come from the funds donated by the Central Intelligence Agency to the Pakistanis for use by the Afghans.

The Afghans were interviewed in the suite of rooms where they are staying at the Embassy Row, a luxury hotel near Dupont Circle. State Department security officers patrol the hallway checking visitors.

The Afghans, who are facing more than 100,000 Soviet troops, have as yet seen no tangible results from the trip,

either in gaining formal diplomatic recognition as a government in exile or in securing pledges of more economic or military aid.

Mr. Rabbani also complained again about the failure of the West, including the United States, to provide enough economic or military aid to the Mujahedeen, particularly anti-aircraft weapons, such as Stingers, which are supposedly to be sent them eventually.

Washington believes that the Geneva negotiations on peace in Afghanistan, sponsored by the United Nations between the Soviet-backed government in Kabul and Pakistan, hold out the best chance now for an accord leading to Soviet troop withdrawal.

Mr. Rabbani complained that his group should be allowed to negotiate directly about the future of Afghanistan but has not even been consulted by the United Nations.

## Complaints About Article

Mr. Rabbani was also upset about a front-page article in The New York Times today about the harvesting of opium in the area of Afghanistan controlled by his forces. The article said that such opium sales to Iran and Pakistan helped finance the war against the Soviet troops. He said he felt this was a slur.

"Our movement is an Islamic movement," he said. "What we do is based on the tenets of Islam. According to our religion the use and the growing and the production of drugs is prohibited. This is wrong. We signed an agreement in the alliance, according to which an order was given to all commanders, that if they find individuals who grow these things, they should destroy them."

"There may have been some growing in some remote areas, but these are small cases, and the article was wrong to generalize about it. It is regrettable to give it such prominence."